

Montana Department of Military Affairs  
**Disaster & Emergency Services Division**  
**State Emergency Coordination Center**

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**Situation Report for July 21, 2007** (issued @ 1500 hrs.)

**07 FIRES**

**I. - Background Information**

- Since June, hot and dry weather has dominated the region creating very high to extreme fire conditions. Fire Indices are at an all time high while fuel moistures are low. Accompanying the high indices are weather patterns that have set the conditions for lightning and lightning caused starts. High pressure weather patterns over the region are responsible for the high temperatures and little to no moisture. Occasional cold fronts push through the region causing severe lightning storms that ignite wildfires. Rain has accompanied these fronts but a return to a high pressure system mitigates any moisture that fell. The weather forecast projects a continuing of the high pressure systems through August and possible into September.

**II. - Current Conditions**

- **Little Wolf Fire** in the Wolf Creek drainage grew to 570 acres with 58 homes evacuated.. Lewis and Clark County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been activated. Little wolf is 30 %contained and is threatening 20 structures. **Little Wolf, Ahorn, Novak Fires are being managed by Bennetts type I team.**
- **Ahorn Fire** on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Lewis and Clark County, is at 7,270 acres. 0% Containment.
- **Novak**, in Lewis and Clark County in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, is at 420 acres. Structures are threatened. Novak is 5% contained and is threatening 10 structures .
- **Fool Creek** on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Lewis and Clark County is at 6214 acres. Percent contained is unknown. Transfer from Svalberg's Fire Use Management Team to Hall's Fire Use Team will occur on 7/22.

### III. - Weather

- **RED FLAG WARNINGS for July 21, 2007**
- **Red flag warnings from 1pm to 9pm** for low humidities and increasing afternoon winds for the following areas:
  - Eastern Glacier
  - Toole
  - Central and Eastern Pondera and liberty
  - Deerlodge/ West Beaverhead-East Beaverhead
  -
- **RED FLAG WARNINGS from 1pm to midnight** for low relative humidity's, hot temperatures gusty southwest winds and a Haines of 6 for the following areas:
  - Gallatin National Forest
  - Wheatland County
  - Sweetgrass County
  - Stillwater County
  - Beartooth Ranger District of the Custer National Forest

A RED FLAG warning means that critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now or will shortly. A combination of strong winds, low relative humidity's, and warm temperatures will create explosive fire growth potential

#### **Prev discussion... /issued 337 am mdt sat July 21 2007/**

**Discussion...**mid and upper level moisture from the pacific continues to get caught up in upper level southwest flow. Radar continues to show returns...however can not get any more than a trace report for ground verification. Therefore have continued to show isolated mountain showers in the forecast through the day. Still have a thermal boundary across the south along with very unstable conditions thanks to good heating. Have continued the trend of late afternoon convection as a result. Temperatures were decreased a few degrees central and north where more clouds are expected through the day. Tonight heights will be increasing as the upper ridge retrogrades back to the west. This will allow for more heating Sunday as drier air moves into the region and the thermal boundary advances back to the north. Sunday night through Monday night...with the upper ridge centered over eastern Montana...western Montana will be more influenced by monsoon moisture and energy. At this time...southwest Montana looks to be main area affected. Temperatures through the period will remain well above average.

**Tuesday through Saturday...**the ridge of high pressure will move off to the east on Tuesday as an upper level trough begins to move into the pacific northwest. Then the bulk of the energy associated with the trough will move across Canada Wednesday into Thursday causing the ridge to flatten. The westerly flow associated with the flattening of the ridge appears to persist into the weekend. A large plume of monsoonal moisture is expected to move into the northern rockies Tuesday which could cause an increase in afternoon and evening thunderstorm development with southwest Montana and Lemhi county seeing the best coverage of convection. This plume will remain over the region through Wednesday. Then a drier air mass will move into the northern rockies for the remainder of the forecast period. Temperatures for Tuesday will continue to be well above normal...with a slight cooling of temperatures for Wednesday through Saturday.

### IV. - Local and Tribal Declarations

- N/A

### V. - Requests for State Financial Assistance

- N/A

**VI. - Summary of State Resources Committed**

- One Montana Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk module is deployed for initial attack . The Blackhawk and its module is staged in Helena.
- One UH-60 Blackhawk and module has been ordered by NRCC for deployment in Missoula for Initial attack starting 7/26/07
- July 20, 2007 at 0700 the SECC was activated to a Level III status With extended hours (0700-1900) The MT DES staff Duty Officer is available 24 hrs and may be reached at (406) 841-3911.
- The Lewis and Clark County Emergency Operation Center was activated on July 19 ,2007.